India's share in purchase of ARMS

27. SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that during 2004, India accounted for 15 per cent of global weapon sales valued at $ 5.7 billion;

(b) if so, the details thereof and reasons therefor; and

(c) whether Government is aware that such heavy arms acquisition are likely to send a wrong signal to the world community about India's credentials and if so, the steps proposed to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (c) Amount spent on capital acquisition in respect of three Services during 2004-2005 was about 6 billion USD. It will not be in the interest of national security to divulge information on details of capital acquisition cases on the floor of the House. Capital acquisition for the Armed Forces is made in the context of the prevailing security environment, emerging technologies, decommissioning of existing platforms and availability of funds amongst others. The armed forces have to be adequately strengthened to safeguard the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the country.

Modernisation of special forces of the army

28. SHRI THENNALAG. BALAKRISHNA PILLAI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the year in which the plan for modernization of the special forces of the Army had been envisaged;

(b) whether the modernisation plan could not be started till date;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps taken to modernize the special forces?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) The modernization of the special forces was envisaged in 2001.

(b) to (d) The modernization of the Armed Forces including Special Forces is a continuous process. In the 10th Army Plan, a sum of Rupees four hundred crore have been earmarked for the modernization of Special

Forces. The amount for which the contracts/schemes have been finalized is Rs. 179.09 crore.

Appointment of chief of defence staff

29. SHRIMATI SUKHBUNS KAUR: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) what decision, if any, has been taken on the recommendation of the Kargil committee for appointment of a Chief of Defence Staff, for better integration of the defence forces; and

(b) the reasons for delay in implementing the same and the steps being taken in that direction?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) The Group of Ministers (GoM) in their Report on "Reforming the National Security System", *inter alia* recommended the establishment of the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS). The recommendations made in the Report of the GoM were approved by the Government on May 11,2001 with modification that a view on the recommendation relating to the institution of the CDS will be taken after consultation with political parties. While a decision on the institution of Chief of Defence Staff has not been taken in view of the complexities and sensitivities involved, a number of institutions like Integrated Defence Staff, Tri-Service bodies like the Defence Intelligence Agency (DIA), the Strategic Forces Command and the Andaman & Nicobar Theatre Command have been established to achieve the basic objectives behind the establishment of the Chief of Defence Staff. Further discussions including a detailed examination of pros and cons of the proposal are considered necessary before the formulation of Government's views on the subject. A decision regarding appointment of the CDS can be taken only after wider consultation with various political parties.

Instruction for making available defence helicopters

30. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government of Andhra Pradesh has requested Union Government to issue necessary instructions to the Flag Officers (Eastern Naval Command), Vishakhapatnam and Indian Air Force Base, Hyderabad